
Utility Customer Service

Appropriation: \$ 2,485,959

The Utility Customer Service Division is responsible for reading water meters; providing monthly utility bills; responding to customer questions, concerns, requests and problems; and collection of delinquent customer accounts. The division is also charged with providing complete and accurate financial data to the Governing Body, the Finance Director, the utility enterprise divisions and the citizens of Santa Fe.

The Utility Customer Service Division consists of four sections: Meter Reading, Billing, Customer Service, and Collections. All four sections work as a cohesive team to assure accurate meter reading, billing and customer service for over 33,000 utility accounts. The division works closely with the Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Divisions to ensure that services are properly rendered, customer problems are addressed, and that all divisions are kept abreast of problems or potential problems with their systems, procedures or processes. The division also works extensively with the Public Utilities, Water Conservation and Water Rate Steering Committees to provide assistance, information and reporting as required.

2003/04 Operational Highlights:

- Continued development of a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for the division.
- Implemented the Remote Meter Reading System pilot program for approximately 1,000 residential and commercial water accounts.
- Continued an aggressive program for collection of delinquent accounts.
- Implemented the Customer Service Call Monitoring System and associated customer service training.
- Created and initiated a utility billing dispute resolution procedure and contracted with an independent hearing officer to assist in resolving customer disputes.
- Worked closely and successfully with the Water Services Division on several projects, including an unaccounted-for water audit, a leak repair loan program, new utility rate recommendations, and an annual meter replacement program.

2004/05 Goals and Objectives:

- Continue the development of and necessary modifications to division policies and procedures.
- Work with the Water Services Division to finalize the implementation of the Leak Repair Loan Program.
- Evaluate the success of the Remote Meter Reading Pilot Project and plan for city-wide implementation if warranted.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate customer service calls.

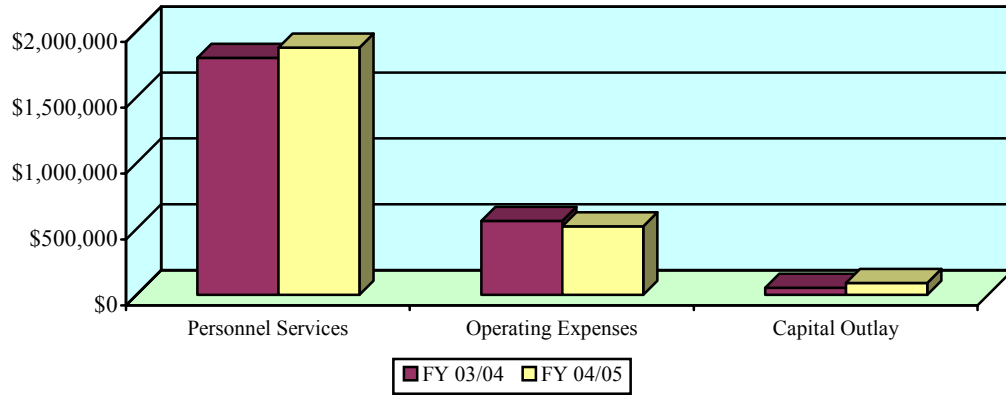
- Contract the services of a collections agency to assist in the collection of delinquent customer accounts.
- Remodel the customer service area to create a safer and more efficient working environment.
- Implement a new utility bill format, including a graph of historical water usage.
- Work with the ITT Department on evaluation and purchase of software systems to enhance division productivity and efficiency.

Budget Commentary:

The Division is supported by an appropriation of \$2,485,959 from the Utility Customer Service Fund (5205), which provides for meter reading activities, collection services for delinquent accounts, and printing services for refuse, sewer and ambulance billing statements. This fund is entirely supported by funding allocations from the Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Utilities that are determined based on the share of division expenses attributable to each utility's customer service needs.

<u>POSITION/CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>FY 03/04 ACTUAL</u>	<u>FY 04/05 BUDGET</u>
Utility Customer Service Division Director	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Accounting Supervisor	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Accounts Manager Collections Monitor	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Account Specialist	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Account Technician	8 – CLFT	8 – CLFT
Administrative Secretary	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Collections Manager	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Customer Service Manager	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Database Specialist	2 – CLFT	2 – CLFT
Lead Meter Reader	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Meter Reader	6 – CLFT	6 – CLFT
Meter Reading Supervisor	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Utility Billing Investigator	1 – CLFT	1 – CLFT
Utility Collections Investigator	<u>1</u> – CLFT	<u>1</u> – CLFT
TOTAL:	27	27

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION



	<u>FY 03/04 REVISED</u>	<u>FY 04/05 APPROPRIATION</u>
Personnel Services	\$ 1,798,387	\$ 1,875,820
Operating Expenses	561,907	520,388
Capital Outlay	<u>53,734</u>	<u>89,751</u>
 TOTAL:	 \$ 2,414,028	 \$ 2,485,959